

The Beacon

James A. Haley VA Hospital Rehab Quarterly Newsletter



Tampa Brings Home The **GOLD**



The 2004 James A. Haley Wheelchair Sports Team brought home 17 medals from the National Veterans' Wheelchair Games in St. Louis, Missouri. The team won 10 Gold, 6 Silver, and 1 Bronze medal. The team members were all first time participants. Congratulations to the team members:

- Katherine Blanco
- Michael Combs
- Michael Cochran
- Johnny Williams

Team members competed in bowling, slalom, air guns, table tennis, nine ball, weightlifting, motorized rally, shot-put, discus, and javelin. They competed in events with other athletes with the same level of function. Pictures of the team will be

posted in Recreation Therapy in SCI.

Here is a letter written from one of the athletes to his family and friends after his experience:

June 23, 2004

Hello everyone,

*I just returned from the 24th annual veterans wheelchair games in St. Louis. My oldest son Harrison went with me. It was an AWESOME TIME. We flew out of Tampa on Monday and returned this past Sunday. This was my first airplane flight since my accident, with the exception of the helicopter ride when I got hurt. When Harrison and I left, I felt like Harry was a child and I was his Father, after the trip I felt as if Harry was not only my son but also a great friend. I am very proud of him, he was a big help. I have not laughed so hard in 4 years. I learned so much on this trip. How to transfer on/off a plane, how to ride up and down an escalator, how to jump curbs in my chair. We met some awesome people and the whole trip was **life changing**. Oh yea, I also won the Gold medal in table tennis, the Silver medal in discus and the Bronze in javelin! I competed against people with the same level of injury. Take care and I hope everyone is doing OK.*

Mike Combs

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games is the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world. Since 1981, JAHVA Hospital has sponsored a team to introduce veterans to wheelchair sports. If interested in being considered for joining the team next year, please contact Cathy Williams at ext 3947.



What about the new “C-leg”?

If you are an above the knee amputee, you may have heard a lot of talk about the new computerized biomechanical prosthesis commonly referred to as the “C-Leg”. In actuality, the “C-Leg” has a microprocessor controlled knee mechanism that is utilized in a very conventional prosthesis. On-board sensors detect movement and timing that adjust and control cylinders within the prosthesis. This results in less effort to walk and a more natural gait pattern is obtained.

Microprocessors enable the wearer to accomplish these activities of daily living:

- Walk down stairs step over step
- Walk at variable cadence
- Walk down ramps
- Walk on uneven ground

Microprocessors **cannot**

- Provide sensory capabilities for heat, cold, or touch
- Perform voluntary movements of the knee, ankle, or foot
- Walk up stairs step over step
- Have the ability to get wet, shower or swim

This latest computerized biomechanical technology is being prescribed at James A. Haley, V.A. Hospital for individuals meeting very specific criteria:

1. Patient must have adequate cardiovascular reserve and cognitive learning ability to master the higher level of technology and to allow for faster than normal walking speed.
2. Patient must demonstrate the ability to ambulate at a faster than baseline rate using a standard prosthesis with a swing and stance control knee.
3. Patient must demonstrate the need for long distance ambulation at variable rates (greater than 400 yards) on a daily basis. Use of the limb in the home or for basic community ambulation is not sufficient to justify provision of the computerized limb over standard limb applications.
4. Patient must demonstrate the need for regular ambulation on uneven terrain or for regular use on stairs. Use of the limb for limited stair climbing in the home or employment environment is not sufficient evidence for prescription of this device over the standard prosthetic application.

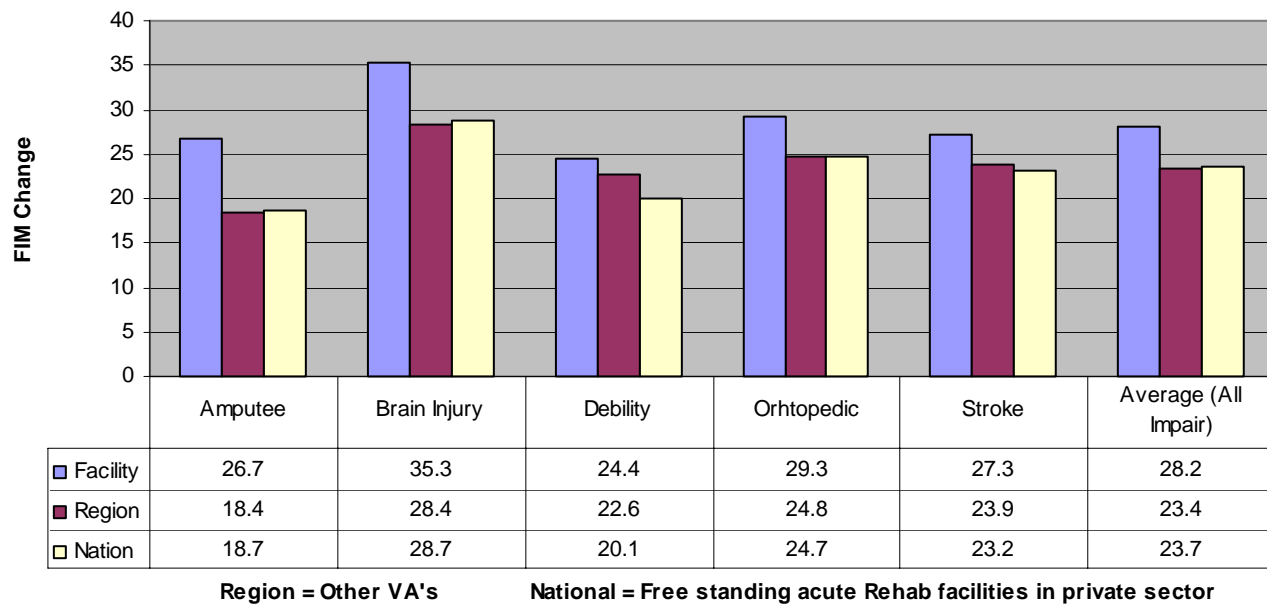
If you are an above the knee amputee who is an accomplished ambulator with a standard prosthesis, you may want to investigate this new “C-Leg” technology. Discuss this information with a member of the of the Amputee / Prosthetic Clinic team or ask your primary physician for a referral to: ***RMS Amputation.***

Jim Switzer, PT

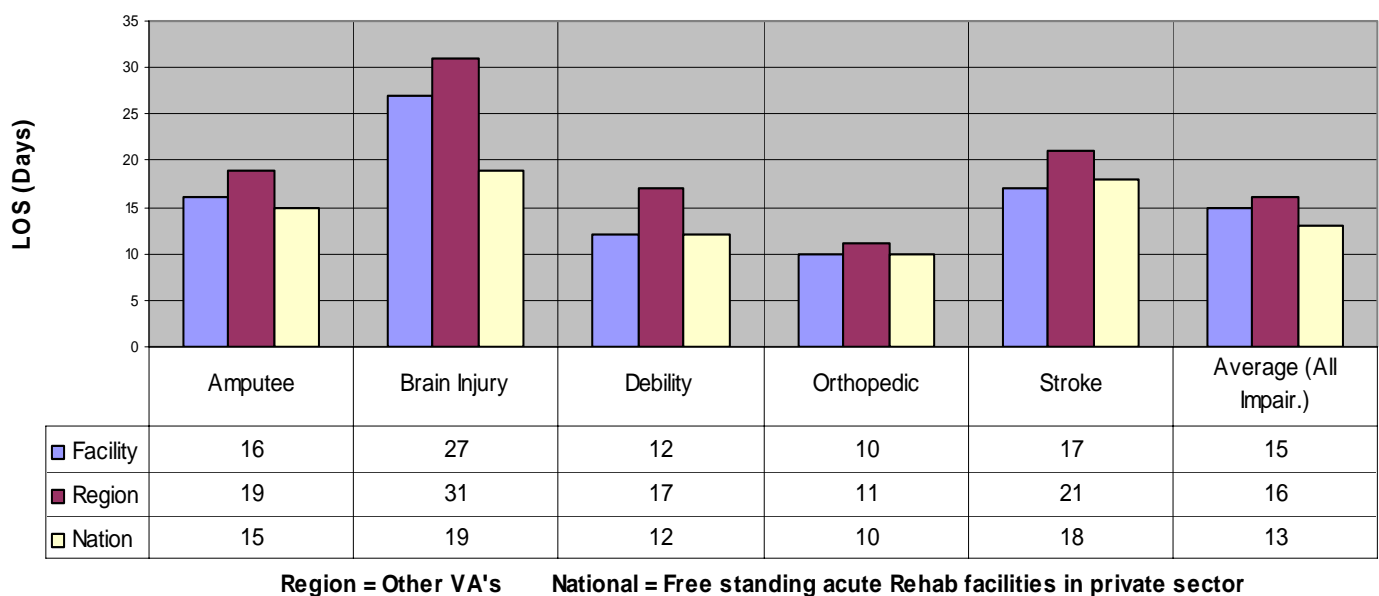


Performance Improvement

Change in FIM: First Admission 4/1/03 to 3/31/04



Length of Stay: First Admission 4/1/03 to 3/31/04



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